

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, APER, UN

SUBJECT: USG ATTITUDE ON STRIKE THREAT

REF: (A) USUN 1612, (B) STATE 93599, (C) STATE 94100

SUMMARY: MISSION IS CONCERNED BY TONE AND CONTENT OF MESSAGE DEPT PLANS TO CONVEY TO SYG WALDHEIM VIA ZIEHL (REF B), AND BELIEVES THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE WEIGHED IF THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ALREADY, BEFORE USUN PROCEEDS WITH THIS APPROACH: END SUMMARY.

1. FOR REASONS GIVEN EARLIER (GENEVA 2937), WE CONTINUE TO THINK IT IS ILL-ADVISED FOR GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE DRAWN INTO THE SPECIFICS OF THE SALARY NEGOTIATIONS BY COUNSELING ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER ON WHAT INCREASES, IF ANY APPEAR JUSTIFIABLE. WE HAVE NO RELIABLE STATISTICS TO GUIDE US, WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE BATTELLE FINDINGS AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE MAY DECIDE WHEN OUR TURN COMES THAT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS WHICH RESULT FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS WHATEVER THE JUSTIFICATION. WE

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REGRET THAT, CONTRARY TO THE COMMON POSITION ADOPTED

HERE ON THIS, THE FRG APPARENTLY GOT RIGHT INTO THE NUMBERS IN THE DEMARCHE ON ZIEHL APRIL 15 (REF A). BY CONTRAST THE LINE THE UK TOOK THERE WOULD APPEAR TO US TO BE THE MORE SUPPORTABLE ONE.

2. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE US DECIDES AT THIS STAGE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS TO PASS JUDGMENT THAT PRESENT SALARIES ARE "ALREADY EXCESSIVE" AND FURTHER INCREASES CAN "NEITHER BE JUSTIFIED NOR TOLERATED," WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PRESENT THE FACTS WHICH BACK UP THESE JUDGMENTS AND TO RECOGNIZE THAT WE MAY HAVE TO MAKE OURSELVES A PARTY TO THE ARGUMENT, AND WHATEVER THE CONSEQUENCES OF IT MAY BE, IF WE ARE TO MAKE OUR JUDGMENT PREVAIL.

3. AS FOR OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD A POSSIBLE NEW STRIKE, MISSION FEELS WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT ASYG DAVIDSON HAS TOLD US HE REGARDS THE RIGHT OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS TO STRIKE AS "90 PERCENT ESTABLISHED" (GENEVA 2749). WE DEDUCE FROM OUTCOME OF VIENNA MEETING OF LEGAL ADVISORS APRIL 6-7 (VIENNA 2790) MOREOVER, THAT ADMINISTRATIONS DO NOT FEEL ABLE TO MARSHAL ANY CONTRARY ARGUMENT. IF WE MEAN TO CHANGE THE EMERGING GROUND RULES, THEREFORE, THE BURDEN WOULD SEEM TO BE ON US TO MOVE TO DO SO. OTHERWISE, WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT, AS THINGS STAND, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IS TAKING PLACE IN A SITUATION IN WHICH A STRIKE HAS BEEN COUNTENANCED (AND PAID FOR) AND IN WHICH THE STAFF HAS BEEN GIVEN NO CLEAR WARNING THAT CONDITIONS FAMILIAR IN CONVENTIONAL LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR DO NOT PERTAIN. THAT IS, THE STAFF HAS NOT BEEN TOLD IT CANNOT RESORT TO STRIKE OR THREAT OF STRIKES, NOR HAVE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS DOING SO BEEN ENUNCIATED (OR PROBABLY EVEN FORMULATED CLEARLY IN THE MINDS OF THE ADMINISTRATIONS).

4. THIS BEING THE CASE, IT SEEMS TO US SOMEWHAT ARCHAIC AND UNWISE TO CONVEY AS THE USG VIEW THAT WE REGARD THE MUTED THREATS WE HAVE HEARD OF A RESUMED STRIKE TO BE A "BLACKMAIL APPROACH," AND THE CONTEMPLATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF RECOURSE TO THIS TO BE AN "IRRESPONSIBLE COURSE OF ACTION." IT IS, AFTERALL, THE CONVENTIONAL BIG CLUB IN A CONVENTIONAL SITUATION, AND THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE ADMINISTRATIONS HAVE NOT MANAGED TO DEMONSTRATE, IN A WAY WHICH CAN BE ENFORCED, THAT THIS SITUATION IS OTHERWISE. IF WE BELIEVE THE BIG-CLUB THE STAFF IS WIELDING IS AN ILLEGITIMATE ONE, AND WE SEE ADVANTAGES IN INJECTING OUR VIEWS ON THIS INTO THE DISPUTE IN

THIS WAY, HERE AGAIN THE BURDEN WOULD SEEM TO BE
ON US TO COME UP WITH AN ALTERNATIVE REGIME THAT WILL
BE ACCEPTED AND CAN BE MADE TO APPLY.

5. MISSION DOES NOT FULLY SHARE DEPT'S VIEW THAT A
STRIKE IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WOULD BE "LESS HARMFUL
THAN AT ALMOST ANY OTHER TIME," IF ONLY BECAUSE WORLD
HEALTH ASSEMBLY (WHA) IS SCHEDULED TO CONVENE HERE
IN GENEVA WITHIN THAT TIME FRAME. AT RECENT ACC MEETING
IT REPORTEDLY WAS WHO DG MAHLER WHO FORCED ISSUE
OF HOW DISPUTE SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED BY ASSERTING THAT
HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT WHO BE MADE "SCAPEGOAT" BECAUSE
OTHERS HAD PERMITTED DISPUTE TO REMAIN UNRESOLVED AT
TIME WHA MEETS IN PALAIS. IF MAHLER AND WHA ARE
CONFRONTED NEVERTHELESS WITH THIS SITUATION, PROBLEM
COULD BECOME ACUTE AND ATTEMPTS AT ITS SOLUTION COULD
BE NARROWED INTO HANDS OF SINGLE ORGANIZATION.

6. MISSION RECOGNIZED THAT GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR ITS
FURTHER ACTIONS IS THAT CONTAINED REF C, WHICH APPEARS
TO US TO BE HIGHLY APPROPRIATE, AND WITH RESPECT TO
ANY SUBSEQUENT APPROACH TO ILO THIS MISSION'S INVOLVEMENT WILL
BE MUTED ACCORDINGLY. HOWEVER, AS POINTS DEPT CONTEMPLATES
MAKING IN NEW YORK (REF B) APPEAR TO US TO STEP
SUBSTANTIALLY BEYOND MANIFESTATION OF CONCERN CALLED
FOR IN REF C, MISSION WISHES TO DRAW DEPT'S
ATTENTION TO FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS, IF ONLY TO
SSURE THAT US VIEWS EXPRESSED HERE AND IN NEW YORK
WILL BE FULLY RECONCILABLE. DALE

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